

performing opportunities, and are encouraged to strive for the highest standards in Mexican folkloric dance interpretation.

Company General Director, Adriana Martinez, a former Capitol Hill staff assistant, began performing professionally at the age of 21 with the Ballet Folklorico de Stanford under the tutelage of master instructors Susan Cashion and Ramon Morones. She joined forces with the principal dancer and Co-Director Enrique Ortiz, former Director of Los Tapatios, to form De Colores Mexican Folk Dance Company in 1996. Principal dancers and several of the founding members each brought with them years of experience teaching, directing, performing, and training. Other Capitol Hill staffers performed traditional dances of Mexican regions highlighting Veracruz, El Norte (Chihuahua), Tamaulipas (Huasteca), and Region Jalisco. The company is composed of beautifully attired women: Constance Chubb, Gloria Corral, Guadalupe Jaramillo, Rocio Jimenez, Irene Macias, Irma Martinez, and Alma Medina. Along with male partners: Maximo Galindo, David Garcia, John McKiernan Gonzalez, Joseph Lukowski, Geoffrey Rhodes, and A. Santiago Alvarez.

Mr. Speaker, the De Colores Mexican Folk Dance Company brings to our nation's capital a rich contribution of Latinos in the arts and humanities visible through their unique art form. I ask colleagues in Congress assembled to wish them great success as they move forward with our vision to educate children about Mexican culture and heritage through traditional folklore.

UPON INTRODUCTION OF H. CON. RES. 249 RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE VA SHOULD RECEIVE PROCEEDS FROM ANY TOBACCO SETTLEMENT

**HON. LANE EVANS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 24, 1998*

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, the proposed settlement between major tobacco companies and various states will receive much attention by the Congress in the coming session. With so much money and emotion wrapped up in one issue, it is anybody's guess how Congress will finally try to resolve this highly contentious issue.

But no matter how Congress ultimately decides to address this issue, there is one group of Americans that cannot be left out of any tobacco settlement—our nation's veterans.

I share the Administration's view that we should make it a major public health priority to reduce cigarette smoking and nicotine addiction, in part through establishing significant constraints on the ability of tobacco companies to continue to engage in deceptive and deadly marketing practices. A responsible, comprehensive tobacco settlement may be the best way to achieve this goal.

But while the Administration has assumed our federal government will collect over \$65 billion in proceeds from any tobacco settlement, its Fiscal Year 1999 (FY 99) budget fails to earmark any settlement money for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the federal agency that spends over \$4 billion each year pro-

viding health care to veterans suffering from tobacco-related illnesses.

If anybody deserves to be protected under the terms of a tobacco settlement, it is our nation's veterans, many of whom became addicted to nicotine while in service to our nation.

As the resolution I am introducing today spells out in greater detail, tobacco companies and our federal government facilitated—if not encouraged—cigarette smoking in the military. From the time of the Civil War until 1956, the Army was required by law to provide a cheap and nearly endless supply of tobacco to its enlisted men. The Air Force still has a similar law on the books. Cigarettes have been distributed free of charge to members of the Armed Forces as part of their so-called "C-rations." As many as 75 percent of our World War II veterans began smoking as young adults during the course of their military service.

Labeling requirements warning of the dangers of nicotine and tobacco usage did not become mandatory for products distributed through the military system until 1970, five years after such a requirement was made applicable to the civilian market. Tobacco products are still sold by military exchanges at substantially discounted rates, thus actively encouraging tobacco usage by military personnel and their dependents. "Smoke 'em if you got 'em" has been a watchword of the military culture for years.

Given this historical backdrop, it should hardly be surprising that many veterans developed an addiction to nicotine in large part because our government and the tobacco companies made cigarettes so accessible and easy to smoke during their military service.

But while our public servants have correctly criticized the tobacco companies for preying on millions of Americans with their highly manipulative marketing practices, the Administration's proposed budget leaves the Department of Veterans Affairs and our veterans to fend for themselves in dealing with tobacco-related illnesses that haunt a substantial portion of our nation's veteran population. And while many would agree that millions of Americans were victimized by misleading advertising and deceptive marketing practices that led them down the path to addiction, the Administration's message appears to be that our veterans should have known better.

The resolution I have introduced today attempts to send a message that the Congress is not prepared to leave our veterans behind. The Department of Veterans Affairs should receive substantial amounts from any tobacco settlement so that it will have sufficient funds to meet the needs of our veterans suffering from tobacco-related illnesses.

This resolution has already received support from most major veterans service organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), the Fleet Reserve Association, the Blinded Veterans Association, and the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

I am also pleased that Representative CHRISTOPHER SMITH (R-NJ), the Vice-Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, has joined with me to introduce this bipartisan, common sense resolution. Congressman SMITH's leadership on this issue is indicative of his long-standing commitment to our nation's veterans, and I welcome his support.

I urge all Members to join me in co-sponsoring this extremely important resolution.

## SUPPORT GROWS FOR CREDIT UNIONS

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

**HON. STEVE C. LATOURETTE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 24, 1998*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. LATOURETTE, and I are pleased to announce that support for H.R. 1151, the Credit Union Membership Access Act, continues to grow. Below are the thirty-first through fortieth of the more than 100 editorials and columns from newspapers all across our nation which support giving consumers the right to choose a non-profit, cooperative, credit union for their financial services.

Surveys have consistently shown that consumers strongly support the value and services they receive from their credit unions. That is why the Consumer Federation of America endorses H.R. 1151, the Credit Union Membership Access Act.

A bipartisan group of more than 190 Members from all regions of our country, and all parts of the political spectrum, are now co-sponsoring the Credit Union Membership Access Act. We should pass it quickly so that credit unions can stop worrying about their future and return to serving their members.

[From the Des Moines Register, Mar. 7, 1998]  
BANKS VS. CREDIT UNIONS—BOTH SIDES HAVE EXAGGERATED THE THREAT—THERE SHOULD BE A PLACE FOR BOTH

Next week, Iowa Congressman Jim Leach has scheduled hearings on whether Congress should act in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's Feb. 25 ruling regarding credit-union membership. Leach had better wear his hard hat.

The court case is part of an increasingly acrimonious debate as banks battle to prevent credit unions from eating into their market.

The banks, which pay hefty taxes, say credit unions, which don't, have an unfair advantage. That advantage might be acceptable for the classic mom-and-pop credit union, but bankers are alarmed at the growth of huge credit unions like the John Deere Community Credit Union in Waterloo with more than \$385 million in assets and a full array of financial services offered to 77,000 members.

Credit unions, in response, point out that at best they still have a slender 6 percent slice of the total market pie nationally, while banks have 77 percent. In Iowa the ratio is something like 88 to 5. As for the tax disparity, credit unions note that, unlike banks, they have no profits on which to pay taxes. Credit unions return all profits to their members, who pay taxes on their earnings. In fact, some Iowa banks are now switching to that very taxing scheme under a new state law.

Although these issues are not central to the question that prompted Leach's hearing, they are what drove the bankers to bring suit against federally chartered credit unions. The suit challenged recent interpretations of federal law that have allowed credit unions to broaden eligibility for membership.